

Car Care Corner

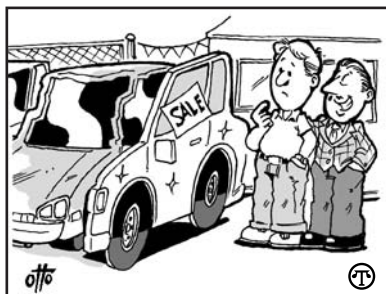
Cars With Damaged Frames Pose A Real Danger

(NAPSA)—Consumers who go shopping for a used car could be playing a very dangerous game. The reason? Unseen damage to the car's frame could end up putting occupants of the vehicle at serious risk.

A car's frame is one of the most important safety features protecting the driver and passengers in an accident. The frame is engineered to work with the car's other safety components, such as the seat belts and airbag, to provide maximum protection for all passengers. Any weakness or flaw in the frame—even movement as little as eight millimeters—can cause the vehicle to react differently than designed in an accident, endangering anyone inside the vehicle as well as others on the road.

Scam artists end up putting millions of used-car buyers at risk by selling vehicles with damaged or rewelded frames—but not informing the buyers of the problem or the risks.

Fortunately, a damaged frame can be repaired—if it's detected and the job is done right. An improperly repaired frame diminishes the structural integrity of the vehicle and increases the risk of serious injury in an accident. It may also harm the vehicle's other safety features, such as airbag deployment. Frame experts, however, are now using state-of-the-art laser technology to better detect defects in a car's frame after it has been repaired. To help you protect your family, auto



Hidden frame damage could make a used car unsafe at any speed.

experts recommend the following:

- If you're driving a car and it just doesn't feel right, it could be there is something wrong with the frame. Take it to a mechanic immediately to make sure there's no damage of which you were unaware.

- Many body shops use outdated methods for repairing cars. Pick a mechanic with state-of-the-art laser technology, which uses lasers to measure a frame's correct specs within a single millimeter.

- Before you buy a used car, check its history carefully. Online services such as carfax.com can help buyers get detailed information about the history of any used car, which could reveal if it's been in a major crash. Simply enter the vehicle's VIN and Carfax will search its nationwide database and provide a detailed vehicle history report in seconds.

For more tips to help protect yourself and your family, or to get a detailed report on any used vehicle, visit www.carfax.com.